Family Literacy Projects Receive Support

Department of Education

News Releases

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Ten projects promoting family literacy in communities across Nova Scotia are the first to receive grants from Nova Scotia's new Family Learning Initiative Endowment Fund.

The fund is a partnership of the Halifax Youth Foundation and federal and provincial governments.

Hugh Smith, president of the youth foundation, and Education Minister Jane Purves announced that $40,000 has been awarded to 10 separate projects from the $2.4-million endowment fund, which was launched last year on Jan. 27, Family Literacy Day.

Fostering literacy in the early years and throughout life is essential to shaping a strong future for Nova Scotians, said Ms. Purves.

"Families play a key role in promoting literacy in the home, at school and in the workplace," said Ms. Purves. "We know it's important to support families in their efforts to create positive learning opportunities. We're delighted that the Family Learning Initiative Endowment can help community groups provide some of that support."

Family literacy programs provide co-ordinated support and learning opportunities for parents, children, and extended family members. The projects funded this year include workshops for parents on promoting reading in the home, programs linking libraries and families and parent and preschool reading sessions.

"This is an opportunity to highlight the important work of many community groups in promoting family literacy," said Mr. Smith. "The Halifax Youth Foundation is pleased that the Family Learning Initiative Endowment Fund can support these efforts."

The endowment fund is a partnership of the Halifax Youth Foundation and the National Literacy Secretariat of Human Resources Development Canada. Supporting partners include the Department of Education, which administers the grant application and review process and the Department of Community Services.

Ms. Purves said family literacy is part of Nova Scotia's comprehensive approach to developing literacy at all levels: in the early years, through the public school system, and through adult programs such as workplace education.

Through its Community Learning Initiative, the Department of

Education provides funding and support to 27 Adult Learning Networks. The department is also actively working with other levels of government to develop a strategy to advance family literacy in Nova Scotia.

Premier John Hamm has proclaimed Jan. 27 as Family Literacy Day in Nova Scotia.

FOR BROADCAST USE:

Today is family literacy day in Nova Scotia and 10 projects are receiving grants.

The province and the Halifax Youth Foundation are handing out 40-thousand dollars to promote family literacy.

These programs help promote reading in the home, link libraries and families, and support parent and preschool reading sessions.

These projects are the first to receive money from Nova Scotia's two-point-four million dollar Family Learning Initiative Endowment Fund.

The fund is a partnership of the Foundation and the federal and provincial governments.

Education Minister Jane Purves says literacy development is essential to shaping a strong future for Nova Scotians.

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NOTE TO EDITORS: Following is a list of 1999-2000 Family Learning Initiative Endowment Fund projects:

Musquodoboit Valley Family Resource Centre

Musquodoboit Valley Family Learning Project,(Middle Musquodoboit)
- Through Rhyme Time and other pre-school activities, this project aims to increase the pre-school literacy of young children through parent interaction, play and literacy experiences, including stories, poems and songs.

Halifax Information and Referral Association
Study Buddies Program, (Halifax)
- This project will establish a Study Buddy program which will match parents and students one-to-one with a tutor in a library setting. Parents will receive instruction and support to work with their children to complete homework assignments and do research projects together.

Centre School Family Literacy Committee
Centre School Family Learning Initiative, (Lunenburg)
- This project will increase awareness of reading in the home through writing stories based on stuffed animals borrowed from the centre, holding a game-show competition using books read as the basis for the questions and by writing stories to put in a time capsule.

Eastern Counties Regional Library
Library Outreach Project, (Chapel Island)
- This project will encourage parents to read to their children and offers techniques to promote reading. This will be done through story hour and craft workshop for children and parents will receive instruction on how to choose books and how to read with their children.

Eastern Counties Regional Library
Je Lis avec... Project, (Petit-de-Grat)
- Je Lis avec (I Read With...) will identify a family member to act as a reading partner for preschool children. This project will also raise awareness to the importance of family reading as well as an initiation to the library.

Maggie's Place
Parent Outreach Program, (Amherst)
- This project will feature a drop-in playgroup that will be offered for parents, care-givers and their preschoolers in rural areas. The playgroup will consist of free play, crafts, rhymes, story telling, circle time, and singing to promote bonding, co-operation and language skills.

Pictou Elementary School Advisory Council
Family Learning Project, (Pictou)
- This project will provide adults academic upgrading, parenting skills workshops and information on how children learn and how they can help their own child's learning. The preschool program will promote interest in learning and develop skills through hands-on activities.

Équipe de travail en alphabétization

Apprends avec moi, (Ste Anne du Ruisseau)
- The Équipe d'alphabétisation will organize family literacy activities for preschoolers and their parents. During the sessions, parents and children will develop their language, their culture and their identity. The sessions will also stress to parents about the importance of French education in the development of Acadian children.

Kjipuktuk Aboriginal College
A Season of Stories, (Halifax)
- Through story-telling sessions, this project will create four children's books that will reflect the co-operative effort of the respective communities and will be used as a resource in their family literacy program.

Hants Shore Community Health Centre
Family Literacy at Work, (Newport, Hants County)
- This project will offer a series of weekly family literacy programs for parents and caregivers and their children. The project will equip parents of identified at-risk children to work at home and in the school environment with their children in the development of their language and reading skills.

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